



VIOLA  
MILLER'S  
WEEKLY  
WRAP UP

11/18/2005

'We've got great folks,' Commissioner Viola Miller said to the governor at Wednesday's DCS budget hearing



## IN GREENE COUNTY, IT'S ALWAYS A GOOD TIME TO COME CALLING

### VISITS OF ALL KINDS PAY BIG DIVIDENDS FOR KIDS

Last week Lane Simpson, Julie Flannery, Karen Chamberlain and I visited Greene County to talk about visiting.

We meet with the terrific DCS staff in Greeneville.

They have spent a great deal of time during the past several months really thinking about the whole issue of visitation: face-to-face, parent-child, sibling.

And we made the trip to pick their brains.

We all know – and there is ample research to support this – that improving our

visits improves our good outcomes for children and families.

As a matter of fact, the CFSR folks discovered that quality visitation resulted in improvements in 14 different outcomes. Anything that gives those kinds of results is worth doing.

We didn't spend our time talking about policy or paper or documentation. We spent our time "down in the weeds" talking about the who, what, when, where and how of quality visitation.

I had a great time, and I hope that the others did as well.

Our plan is for the product of our work to be a one-page – front and back – laminated visitation tip sheet.

This tip sheet can simple be carried around by staff as a reminder of the salient

pieces of a good visit. It will be nothing fancy, just good practice. Karen has done a draft that she will send to the Greene County staff for review and changes before we go to production.

Thanks to Greene County DCS for your time, help and insight. The food was terrific as well.

One last note on visitation: We are battling about 87 percent on monthly face-to-face visits.

Let's challenge ourselves to get to 93 percent in a month and 96 percent in two months. Then we celebrate!

There will also be those few out-of-state children and runaways, but we can do 96 percent and make certain that we are using these visits to always, always, always, move our children toward permanency.

### DCS AT THE CAPITOL



GOVERNOR BREDESEN: You guys, all of you, you run a great department...

COMMISSIONER MILLER: We've got great folks.

GOVERNOR: This is one that has gone from deep down on the list to right up to that very top echelon. I appreciate everything that you've done. Great job.

[www.tennessee.gov/budget06\\_hearings.html](http://www.tennessee.gov/budget06_hearings.html)

## GETTING DATA FROM THE FIELD – IN ORDER TO SERVE THE FIELD

The Data Quality Unit hosted a conference for Field Systems Administrators from across the state last month in Nashville.

The FSAs meet periodically to share ideas and obtain updates in order to improve their ability to assist field staff with their use of TNKids.

Michael Price, Executive Director of the Office of Information Systems served as the keynote speaker for the conference. Mr. Price discussed plans for the final enhancement of our current version of TNKids, which is scheduled for early 2006.

Mr. Price discussed the reasons that our current TNKids is being phased out. The new system will be designed from the ground up to be easier to use and better comply with federal standards for information systems. The Office of Information Systems understands that their role is to support the important work done by every employee in the department by creating an information system which provides accurate and adequate documentation of the work done while being as easy as possible to use.

Since many FSAs are employees who transitioned or will be transitioning from CSA to DCS, issues pertinent to their transformation were addressed.

The Help Desk assists users with issues concerning the workings of their computers while the FSAs assist primarily with the proper entry of information in TNKids. Since the two tasks are closely related, a segment

was devoted to enhancing the FSAs and the Help Desk working together.

FSAs are valuable in providing input from the field about how TNKids affects the work and taking information back to the field.

– CLAUDE WILSON

## CONGRATS!

On December 1, 2005, LANE WILLIE will be retiring after 29 years of State service.

Lane began her career in 1976 as a Secretary with the Department of Correction.

She transferred to the Department of Youth Development when the agency began, and the on to Children's Services. Since 1991, Lane has been an Administrative Services Assistant with the Special Services Unit.

Join me in wishing Lane well as she begins this new exciting phase of her life!

– PAM McCAIN

## CONGRATS AGAIN

Please join me in congratulating two of our staff in their well deserved advancement of their careers. KIERAN CLOONAN has accepted the role of Director of System Development and Enhancements effective 12/1/05. Ed Bennett has accepted the role of Director of Production Support and Special Projects.

Kieran joined us in August 2004 as a Business Analyst in our Oracle team. His contributions have been significant to the E-Business project.

We are pleased that he has decided to join the State as an employee.

His education and information systems experience have prepared him to be successful as the new Director of System Development and Enhancements.

ED BENNETT joined the State in March 2001 as the Manager of TN KIDS Application Development. He has managed each TN KIDS release since that date. His nearly twenty years of management experience has been invaluable to this division as we provided agency software in the support of the children and families of the State of Tennessee. Ed will be of great assistance as the new Director of Production Support and Special Projects.

Please take this opportunity to offer your congratulations to Kieran and Ed. We certainly look forward to their leadership in supporting our agency's mission.

– MICHAEL PRICE SR.

## WANT TO SUBMIT SOMETHING TO THE WRAP UP?

REMEMBER: THERE'S A NEW GROUPWISE ADDRESS JUST FOR THIS PURPOSE:

[EIWeeklyWrapUp](#)